

I claim:

1. A friction sheet feeding machine, comprising:
  - (a) a tray effective for holding a stack of sheets,
  - (b) a driven friction feed roller configured and arranged relative to the tray for contacting a downward facing major surface of a lowermost sheet in a stack retained within the tray and pulling the lowermost sheet in a machine direction from underneath the stack, and
  - (c) a driven friction retard roller vertically spaced in parallel relationship above the friction feed roller for contacting a leading edge and any exposed upward facing major surface of a sheet immediately overlying the lowermost sheet so as to retard advancement of the overlying sheet, wherein driven rotation of the friction retard roller is reversible as between a concurrent direction relative to the friction feed roller when in a first state and a countercurrent direction relative to the friction feed roller when in a second state.
2. The machine of claim 1 wherein the machine further comprises (i) an electric motor having a drive shaft operably connected to the friction retard roller for driving the friction retard roller, and (ii) a switch for electrically switching the rotational direction of the drive shaft and thereby effecting switching of the friction retard roller as between the first state and the second state.
3. The machine of claim 1 further comprising a support frame wherein the tray, the driven friction feed roller and the driven friction retard roller are each attached to the frame with the driven friction retard roller releasably connected to the frame.
4. The machine of claim 1 further comprising a first motor operably connected to the friction feed roller for driving the friction feed roller, and a second motor operably connected to the friction retard roller for driving the friction retard roller.
5. The machine of claim 4 wherein the second motor is in electrical communication with the first motor whereby the second motor is operational only when the first motor is operated.